

<b>Notice of Allowability</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/761,780	HASHIMOTO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Vanel Frenel	3627	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 09/06/06.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-3,5-7,9,14,15,18 and 19.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some\*    c) ☐ None    of the:
  1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
  - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached
    - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)</li> <li>2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)</li> <li>3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),<br/>Paper No./Mail Date _____</li> <li>4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit<br/>of Biological Material</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application</li> <li>6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),<br/>Paper No./Mail Date _____</li> <li>7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment</li> <li>8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance</li> <li>9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> </ol> |
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## **DETAILED ACTION**

### **Notice to Applicant**

1. This communication is in response to the Amendment filed on 9/06/06. Claims 1, 9, 18 and 19 have been amended. Claims 4, 8, 10-13 and 16-17 have been cancelled. Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9, 14-15 and 18-9 are pending.

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

2. Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9, 14-15, and 18-19, renumbered as 1-11 are allowed. The following is an Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance.

Claim 1 is directed to a processing unit identifying inventory information of stores having an address which is in proximity to an address designated by the customer, and transmitting, to the client device in response to the request for product information, the identified product inventory information on an individual-store basis corresponding to the respective stores selected on the basis of customer identification information received from the respective client device, wherein each store's proximity to the designated address is determined by the processing unit by a first checking for an exact zip code match between the respective stores and the designated address, a second checking for a match of the first n digits of the designated address zip code and the respective stores if there was not an exact zip code match, and a third checking for stores having a zip code within a range of the first n digits of the designated address zip code if there was not the exact zip code match and the first n digits of the zip codes did not match.

Art Unit: 3627

The closest prior art of record, Shaffer et al (6,748,426) discloses system and method for linking information in global computer network.

Burton discloses methods and apparatus for on-line ordering.

ServiceMerchandise.com discloses the concept of providing online customer with the ability to see whether an item is in stock at local stores and reserve the item for pickup.

However, none of the cited prior art discloses nor fairly/suggest a second checking for a match of the first n digits of the designated address zip code and the respective stores if there was not an exact zip code match, and a third checking for stores having a zip code within a range of the first n digits of the designated address zip code if there was not the exact zip code match and the first n digits of the zip codes did not match.

A search has been conducted for a foreign prior art, however, none has been found.

3. Any comments considered necessary by Applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and , to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement for Reasons for Allowance".

**Conclusion**

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vanel Frenel whose telephone number is 571-272-6769. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Florian Ryan Zeender can be reached on 571-272-6790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

V.F

V.F

January 1/19/07

  
F. RYAN ZEENDER  
PRIMARY EXAMINER